
CHECKLIST & TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPLICANT: Mayor and City Council of Cumberland, Maryland

NAME OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY: Cumberland

Please review the checklist of attachments and furnish all of the attachments that are applicable. Contents of the notebook should be tabbed and organized as follows:

- ☐ **TAB #1 Applicant Information**
- ☐ **TAB #2 Sustainable Community Baseline Information - In addition to hard copies of the project location map, a detailed listing of parcels (i.e. Parcel ID Numbers) that form the project boundary should be included. Maps should also be submitted in electronic GIS form (shape file). If you have additional comments or questions, please contact Brad Wolters, Senior GIS Specialist, DHCD, wolters@mdhousing.org.**
- ☐ **TAB #3 Local Capacity to Implement Plans & Projects: Attach Sustainable Communities Workgroup roster noted in Section III**
- ☐ **TAB #4 Sustainable Community Plan**
- ☐ **TAB #5 Progress Measures**
- ☐ **TAB #6 Local Support Resolution**
- ☐ **TAB #7 Signed Sustainable Community Application Disclosure Authorization and Certification**

**All documents on this checklist are mandatory.
Failure to provide the requested document will automatically deny your application.**

I. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICANT INFORMATION**Name of Sustainable Community:** Cumberland

Legal Name of Applicant: Mayor and City Council of Cumberland, Maryland

Federal Identification Number: 52-6000786

Street Address: 57 N. Liberty St.

City: Cumberland**County:** Allegany**State:** MD**Zip Code:** 21502

Phone No: (301) 759-6431**Fax:** (301) 759-6432**Web Address:** www.ci.cumberland.md.us

Sustainable Community Contact For Application Status:**Name:** Brian Grim**Title:** Mayor

Address: 57 North Liberty Street**City:** Cumberland**State:** MD**Zip Code:** 21502

Phone No: 301-759-6424 x**Fax:** 301-759-6438**E-mail:** bgrim@allconet.org

Person to be contacted for Award notification:**Name:** Kathy McKenney**Title:** Historic Planner/Preservation Coor

Address: 57 North Liberty Street**City:** Cumberland**State:** MD**Zip Code:** 21502

Phone No: 301-759-6431 x**Fax:** 301-759-6432**E-mail:** kmckenney@allconet.org

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

Through this section, applicants will demonstrate that trends and conditions in homeownership, property values, employment, commercial and residential vacancy, community facilities and infrastructure, natural resources, the local business and residential districts show a need for new or continued revitalization reinvestment. Demographic data and trends provided by Applicants should support the choice of the proposed Sustainable Community Area boundary and help form a basis for needs and opportunities to be addressed through the initiatives and projects described in the Sustainable Community Action Plan (Section IV).

POINTS IN THIS SECTION WILL BE AWARDED BASED ON THE SC AREA'S NEED FOR REINVESTMENT AS EVIDENCED BY THOROUGH DESCRIPTIONS OF CURRENT CONDITIONS OR TRENDS (and will not be based upon current or planned revitalization activities which will be covered in Section IV).

A. Proposed Sustainable Community Area (s):

County: Allegany

Name of Sustainable Community: Cumberland

Include boundary descriptions and a map of the Sustainable Community. In addition to hard copies of the of the project location map, a detailed listing of parcels (i.e. Parcel ID Numbers) that form the project boundary should be included. If possible, maps should also be submitted in electronic GIS form (shape file). If you have additional comments or questions, please contact Brad Wolters, Senior GIS Specialist, DHCD, Wolters@MdHousing.org

The proposed Sustainable Communities Area boundaries encompasses the corporate limits of the City of Cumberland.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

Approximate number of acres within the SC Area: 5,632.50

Existing federal, state or local designations (check all that apply):

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Legacy Area | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Designated Neighborhood |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Main Street | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maple Street |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Historic District | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National Register Historic District |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A & E District | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Enterprise Zone Special Taxing District |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BRAC | <input type="checkbox"/> State Designated TOD |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other(s): <u>Federal HUBZone</u> | |

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

Prior Revitalization Investments & Smart Growth:

(a) List and describe any significant State and local smart growth or revitalization related program investments (for instance, Community Legacy or SC Rehab Tax Credit) that have been invested in the Area since the launching of Maryland's Smart Growth initiative and programs in 1997 (including Housing investment). What impact have these investments made in the community? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City of Cumberland has endeavored to be a leader in Smart Growth policies and practices and has been proud to provide good examples of best practices as a participant in many of the State of Maryland's Smart Growth programs, bringing a comprehensive approach to revitalization and allowing for the community to enjoy various layers of offerings to its citizens, ranging from heritage resources to the arts to housing initiatives. This helps to target redevelopment that the City would like to encourage while also capitalizing on existing assets and allowing local citizens and developers to access incentive programs that are often tailored to their individual needs.

Since 1997, Cumberland properties have been regular participants in what is now called the Sustainable Communities Tax Credit program. To date, 28 residential and commercial properties have participated, combining for a total of \$25,851,467.93 in investment back into the community. These projects received a total of \$5,161,293.59 in credits from the program, and were often combined with similar local and federal tax incentive programs.

The City of Cumberland has encouraged business owners to participate in the Neighborhood Business Works program for the grant and loan programs. Additionally, the City partnered with Tri-County Council for Western Maryland to apply for the Main Street Maryland-targeted NBW grant funds and used these funds to develop a façade grant program, helping to leverage additional private investment.

Also in 1997, Cumberland was designated as one of the first Main Street Maryland communities. Following the Main Street Four Point Approach and with a great deal of technical assistance from Maryland DHCD staff, Downtown Cumberland began to become energized with new life and new ideas to revitalize the struggling district. The designation appeared to be an important catalyst for once again making Downtown Cumberland a destination.

In 2008, Cumberland was proud to become one of the first Maple Street Communities. As a residential neighborhood situated in proximity to the Main Street-designated area, the Virginia Avenue Corridor provides the community a targeted area to continue a comprehensive revitalization approach while strengthening its relationship with the Main Street district and has included several façade improvement programs, access to local, state, and federal tax incentive programs, the location of the area's first LEED-certified building, and a major infrastructure improvement project.

Through Canal Place, Cumberland became the first Certified Heritage Area in Maryland. Created by legislation, the heritage area helped to blaze the trail for this new state concept and continues to grow into the vision set forth in the mid-1990s. Not only an important heritage tourism site and partner, Canal Place is also an important economic driver.

In 2001, the City of Cumberland drafted the first-ever Community Legacy Plan of Action and became one of the first designated communities, responding to the State of Maryland's solicitation of communities that were experiencing decline and disinvestments, but that had the potential, with modest public and private investment, to be vibrant places to live and work. These Community Legacy Areas are often referred to as "at-risk" or "transitional" communities.

Since 2001, the City of Cumberland has been honored to have been awarded a total of \$3,400,400.00 over a series of ten awards and for being mentioned as a community who helps to set a good example. Joining together with community partners that shared common goals and possessing specific strengths, Cumberland embarked on a plan of action encompassing a multi-faceted approach to revitalization. The partners realized that without a broad vision of what a community needs to not only survive, but to thrive, all aspects within it need to be examined and strategies developed to improve the overall vitality of the community.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(b) Describe any existing barriers to Smart Growth that may affect your jurisdiction or the proposed SC Area. For instance, does your area have higher development fees than outer "cornfields"?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Overall, Cumberland is well positioned to be able to grow and redevelop while adhering to Smart Growth principles. There are only a few potential barriers that could be identified. These include the lack of available level land within the existing corporate boundaries. Cumberland is comprised of hills and valleys, making large tracts of land often difficult to find. Additionally, during the boom in the early to middle part of the twentieth century, buildings were constructed in many areas where the topography or other conditions were less than ideal. If Cumberland chooses to move forward with any large scale neighborhood redevelopment projects, these same areas will not be conducive to development, pushing the development into alternate pathways. Cumberland's exploration of potential areas for annexation would make use of existing infrastructure so this should still adhere to Smart Growth principles. Finally, the combined City and County personal and property taxes within Cumberland have been noted as potential obstacles for encouraging continued development. Although these rates provide a number of services, these taxes can sometimes encourage development to occur outside of the City limits. City leaders have attempted to offset these costs through access to local, state, and federal incentive programs but these do not always sway the final decision.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

B. Community Conditions: Strengths and Weaknesses

(1) Describe the strengths and weaknesses in the proposed Area's existing built environment. For example, what is the condition of housing? Are there underutilized historic buildings and cultural places? What is the condition and availability of community parks and recreational assets? Are there transportation assets? What is the current condition of community infrastructure such as roads and lighting? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Housing

The City has historic housing stock from the 19th & early 20th centuries. However, a long-term decline in population & in the manufacturing base has left widespread areas in need of reinvestment. Overall, 41.2% of the city's housing was constructed before 1940. An additional 51.6% was constructed between 1940 & 1980 so a total of 92.8% of the housing is more than 30 years old.

According to the 2010 Census, 15.5% of housing units were considered vacant, bringing issues with property maintenance & blighted properties in many neighborhoods. Economic conditions have contributed to the maintenance problem since owners often do not have resources. The City employs a Code Enforcement Officer.

Recreation

The City has 141.6 acres of developed and 62.9 acres of undeveloped areas. Five complexes encompass 12 athletic fields, 10 basketball courts, 8 tennis courts, 1 swimming pool, & 4 multi-use playground areas. Cumberland does not operate indoor recreational facilities but has an agreement with the County Board of Ed for use of indoor facilities at 5 schools. Allegany College of MD has indoor & outdoor facilities for public use. Open space exists at Canal Place, offering recreational & special event facilities linking from the grounds to the C&O Canal Towpath & the GAP bike trail.

Transportation

The primary public transportation is bus service provided by Allegany County Transit. This service consists of 5 scheduled routes that reach most areas of the City. Additional transportation is available for persons with special needs. Daily Amtrak service is provided between Chicago, IL & Washington, DC.

Bicycle/ Pedestrian Access

The Great Allegheny Passage, a hiking/biking trail connecting Pittsburgh to Cumberland & to the C&O Canal Towpath through to Georgetown positions the city as a hub on a 300-mile interstate trail network. Cumberland established a Bicycle Advisory Commission to make recommendations & to work with the 2008 Cumberland Trails and Bikeway Master Plan. Connecting points & bike routes along City streets are lacking, but planned. Every time a street improvement is made the City attempts to provide bicycle & pedestrian improvements.

Infrastructure

Cumberland, using aging infrastructure, provides water & sewer services to the region. The City has treatment facilities for both water & sewer with capacity to handle the region with an increased population & several large industries. The water distribution system has adequate storage to provide reliable water pressure. In 1999 the water system received a good ISO rating but costs for proper upgrades have delayed important work. Water mains & valves are in need of upgrades to keep the system working properly. A Flood Control System was designed & built by the Army Corps of Engineers, protecting the City from flooding since the early 1950's.

The City is under a Consent Decree/Order to eliminate costly Combined Sewer Overflows. Assistance of State & Federal agencies is necessary to resolve the problem. The City has completed a study to determine the size & location of a storage facility.

The road system lacks space for bike lanes & many post-1950 streets lack sidewalks. The street system was analyzed for a Pavement Management System & identified priorities. The City has an underfunded street improvement program that could be properly maintained if funding is dedicated annually. Cumberland's bridges are in acceptable condition, however two bridges owned by CSX are in poor condition & the Baltimore Street Bridge needs a new deck.

Traffic lights have been updated for energy efficiency, but many intersections have outdated traffic controllers. Street lighting is just adequate. Increased costs threaten the City's ability to maintain a safe light level. Many traffic signs do not have proper reflectivity. The City has undertaken inventories & planning studies to determine the long term needs of traffic lighting & signage.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(2) Describe the Area's land use/zoning make-up (residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use). Is the current land use or zoning conducive to revitalization investment? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

From the City of Cumberland's Comprehensive Plan, "Cumberland's existing land use reflects its growth from a mid-eighteenth century stockade and trading post to a regional center of commerce and industry during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The City's basic land use pattern consists of a commercial and institutional core surrounded by residential neighborhoods between forested ridges, with industrial areas located adjacent to the Potomac River, Wills Creek, and rail corridors (see Figure 7). Defined by Queen City Drive/the CSX railroad tracks and Wills Creek, the downtown continues to function as Cumberland's urban center, focused on office and retail uses including the Baltimore Street mall and the Cumberland municipal complex. Located across Wills Creek from the downtown, Washington Street is also part of the urban center, supporting the Allegany County Courthouse complex and a number of professional offices located in former residences.

The downtown's role as a regional commercial center has been eroded in recent decades by automobile-oriented retail development both inside and outside of Cumberland. Highway-oriented commercial development is prevalent along Industrial Boulevard and the North Mechanic Street/North Centre Street corridor. In addition, the Rolling Mill industrial site saw redevelopment as a commercial shopping center, including a grocery store. Virginia Avenue, the traditional retail center of South Cumberland, has suffered from competition from the newer automobile-oriented businesses.

Cumberland's first residential neighborhoods developed on the relatively level land adjacent to the central core and in South Cumberland. During the twentieth century, residential development spread into previously undeveloped portions of the West and East Sides and South Cumberland, along roadways between ridges (for example, Bedford/Frederick Streets and Shades Lane in northeast Cumberland), and around the Kelly Springfield plant in southwest Cumberland. As the level land most suitable for development became scarcer and mountainside locations more desirable, residential and institutional development also spread onto steep slope and ridgetop areas, such as Haystack Mountain.

A significant feature of the traditional, pre-zoning land use pattern was the widespread occurrence of non-residential uses such as small industrial establishments (breweries, laundries, etc.); churches, schools, and other institutions; and neighborhood stores throughout residential areas, often in close proximity to adjacent residences. These uses have declined in recent decades, resulting in many vacant or underutilized properties scattered throughout the City, often in close proximity to adjacent residences. The former productive uses of these properties have in many cases been replaced by less intensive activities such as warehousing and storage.

Other major land uses in Cumberland include public/semi-public/institutional (government buildings, schools, medical facilities, religious institutions, etc.), recreation and open space, and agriculture. Public/semi-public/institutional facilities are located throughout the City with a major concentration in the downtown and Washington Street areas. Large recreation and open space properties include the City-owned Constitution Park in the East End and Gene Mason Sports Complex in the South End, both of which are developed with recreational facilities; an undeveloped County park on Haystack Mountain next to the Narrows; and the C&O Canal National Historical Park. Agricultural use in the City is limited to a large farm next to Valley Road in northwest Cumberland, the largest remaining undeveloped property in the City that is mostly unconstrained by steep slopes and/or the presence of 100-year floodplain.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

3) Describe strengths and weaknesses in basic features of community quality-of-life. For instance, is crime an issue for this SC Area? What is the condition and quality of educational choices available to the community? Are artistic, cultural, or community resources, events or facilities within or accessible to residents in the proposed SC Area? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Crime

Cumberland is known to have a very low crime rate and public safety has long been a priority of the local government. Law enforcement agencies throughout the county have integrated their technology and information, providing a much more effective and efficient police services to all residents. The Cumberland Police Department's Annual report shows a 1 % decrease in serious part I type crimes in 2010 (Murder, Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary and Thefts). The City saw an increase in Robbery complaints in 2010, however many of these were related and were closed in relatively short order by arrest. Assaults have shown an 11 % increase in the past year, but aggravated assaults have fallen. Cumberland maintains a level of criminal activity that is slightly lower than many of the surrounding jurisdictions.

Education

The Allegany County Public School System has a PreK-12 student population of about 11,000 students and operates 23 school buildings, which include 13 elementary schools, 1 elementary-middle school, 4 middle schools, 3 high schools, a career center, and an alternative school. Additionally, there are various private Catholic and non-denominational schools in the area.

Frostburg State University offers a wide array of baccalaureate and master's programs with a special emphasis on education, business, environmental studies and the creative and performing arts. In addition, the campus is the site of the Allegany Business Center, an initiative managed by Allegany County to bring technology-based businesses to the area. Allegany College of Maryland is a two-year public community college. Major academic areas include health care and human services, business professions, computer science and other technology fields, and the hospitality/tourism industry. Complementing ACM credit programs is the college's Center for Continuing Education, providing everything from training for entry-level workers and work force development training for existing employees to continuing education for re-licensure and recertification in a wide variety of professions.

Arts, Cultural, Community Resources.

Cumberland has begun a wonderful renaissance, fueled in part by a growing arts and cultural scene, a new emphasis on tourism, and a continued focus on economic development.

Cumberland has the benefit of having a Certified Heritage Area and a National Historical Park located within the heart of its central business district, complimenting the Arts & Entertainment and Historic Districts and providing residents and visitors with the unique opportunity to enjoy this inviting green space and a wealth of activities without leaving the downtown. The Canal Place Preservation & Development Authority has worked tirelessly to develop the "Canal Place Live Presents" brand over the past several years.

In addition to a growing number of enterprising artists, the A&E District is home to the Allegany Arts Council and its Saville Gallery, Allegany Museum, Cumberland Theatre, Arts at Canal Place Cooperative Gallery, New Embassy Theatre, TriState Community School for the Arts, Windsor Hall, Gilchrist Gallery of the Arts, Gordon-Roberts House, a variety of retail and specialty stores, the Canal Place Heritage Area, and the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad.

In addition to these cultural assets, and the many talented visual artists, musicians, performers and writers who make Allegany County their home, Downtown Cumberland's Arts & Entertainment District can also boast of a variety of restaurants and bars that feature live music and outdoor dining, a coffee shop, a creamery, a Farmer's Market every week during summer/fall months, and a full schedule of seasonal events that include the Friday After Five music series, Saturday Arts Walks, Shakespeare at Canal Place, an annual "Plein Air" event, and the annual Mountain Maryland Artists Studio Tour.

The Allegany County Library System has two branches within the City limits.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

C. Natural Resources and Environmental Impact: Strengths and Weaknesses

(1) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the community's "natural environment." in or near the Sustainable Community Area. What is the current condition of key natural resources - lands, air, water, watersheds, tree canopy, other? If the community is located in a coastal zone, what risks might the community be subject to associated with climate induced sea level rise? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Land:

Cumberland's natural features - in particular the Potomac River and Wills Creek and the steep, forested mountainsides surrounding them - have played a major role in shaping the pattern of human settlement in the City. Cumberland's historic roots largely derive from its strategic position at both a gap in the mountains and the confluence of the Potomac River and Wills Creek. As the route of the B & O Railroad and C & O Canal, the Potomac River corridor continued to be an important part of Cumberland's history. Since initial settlement in the mid-eighteenth century, construction of the City has largely been confined to the valley floors and bases of the surrounding mountains. By contrast, the mountains have remained relatively free of development. Today the forested slopes of these mountains provide a scenic background and striking contrast to Cumberland's urban areas.

Air:

Air quality in Cumberland, MD is 83 on a scale to 100 (higher is better). This is based on ozone alert days and number of pollutants in the air, as reported by the EPA.

Water:

The drinking water that serves the City of Cumberland and much of Allegany County, Maryland, is surface water originating from the Lake Koon and Lake Gordon reservoirs located in the Cumberland Valley Township, Bedford County, Pennsylvania. The primary tributaries supplying water to the reservoirs are Evitts Creek, Growden Run, Oster Run as well as several unnamed tributaries. The Evitts Creek Water Company (under the direction of the City of Cumberland) provides water treatment by clarification, filtration, and disinfection.

Cumberland is fortunate to have the two lakes in Pennsylvania that provides high quality source water. Lake Gordon is approaching 100 years old and the City has experienced natural lake deterioration. The City, Evitts Creek Water Company, and local Steering Committee are working to reverse deterioration and maintain a healthy lake system.

The Evitts Creek Water Company analyzes its drinking water for all parameters outlined in the National Primary Drinking Water Regulation: Consumer Confidence Report 40 CFR Parts 141 and 142 unless a waiver has been granted by Maryland Department of the Environment and/or Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. The City also analyzes for many unregulated chemical compounds. Parameters and compounds that were detected in treated water over the past calendar year are displayed in the 2010 Water Quality Data Chart which can be viewed at http://www.ci.cumberland.md.us/new_site/. For the past several years Evitts Creek Water Company has met or exceeded EPA's standards for safe drinking water.

Tree Canopy:

A tree canopy analysis completed in 2008 revealed that Cumberland's urban tree canopy ranked above average in Maryland and in comparison to cities of similar size. The tree canopy covers 3107 acres, or 49% of the land within the City. Cumberland has several contiguous forested areas (more than 20 acres in size). The large forested patches contain 60% of the City's tree canopy. The more urbanized areas are 27% covered by tree canopy. The urban tree canopy is a vital City asset that helps reduce stormwater runoff, improve air quality, reduce the City's carbon footprint, enhance the quality of life, contribute to savings on energy bills, and serves as habitat for wildlife. It is important to continue to monitor the tree canopy and work to maintain and or increase the urban tree canopy for reasons listed above.

Watersheds:

Cumberland encompasses parts of three 8-digit watersheds within the Upper Potomac River Basin; Evitts Creek, Wills Creek, and the Potomac River Lower North Branch watersheds. Total Daily Maximum Loads (TMDL) exists for two of the watersheds; Evitts Creek – Sediment and Wills Creek – sediment, fecal bacteria and low pH. Water Quality Analysis has been or is in the process of being completed for various impairments for each watershed.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(2) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of any current efforts to reduce the community's "carbon footprint" or impact on the environment. Is recycling (commercial or residential) available to minimize waste? Are there current efforts to encourage the purchase and availability of fresh local food and other local products and services to the community? Describe any current energy or water conservation efforts that may be underway. If the community has not implemented one of the above initiatives, has the community identified a need or interest to pursue these or other efforts to reduce environmental impact, for instance through the new Sustainable Maryland Certified initiative? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Recycling

A comprehensive recycling program is available to Cumberland residents by Allegany County. Four drop-off sites are located within the City. Glass, newspaper, cans, paper, cardboard, magazines, oil/antifreeze, and #1 & #2 plastics are accepted. The City of Cumberland participates on the County's Solid Waste Management Board where the recycling program is continuously evaluated.

Participation for the recycling program is tracked on a county-wide basis. Allegany County's state mandated waste diversion goal is 15%. In 2009 the County diverted 29% of waste materials from being landfilled. The Solid Waste Management Board works to encourage waste reduction and reuse efforts, community information outreach, and composting in addition to providing recycling and solid waste program recommendations to the County. Public participation at the Board meetings is encouraged.

Water conservation

The City of Cumberland has a Drought Contingency Plan that outlines the implementation of conservation measures for a drought situation. Annual Water Quality Reports sent to all water customers display a water conservation message and a link to www.epa.gov/watersense for family friendly water conservation tips.

Stormwater Management

All redevelopment projects are required to undergo stormwater management following the Stormwater Management Act of 2007. All stormwater runoff enters the combined sewer system and is either treated at the wastewater treatment plant or overflows to creeks or the Potomac River. As a result of the combined sewerage overflows (CSO) the City was issued a Consent Decree and Judgment in 2001. The CSO consent decree required the City to comply with the US EPA CSO Control Policy. A Long Term Control Plan was developed, which outlines a plan of action to improve infrastructure to a point at which the City would be compliant. Limitations were imposed on the amount of new sewer connections. The City is allowed up to 23,000 gallons per day in new sewer connections a year. Sewer connections greater than 23,000 gallons per day in a given year require prior approval by MDE. By completing the list of improvements within Plan the City expects to collect and transfer the majority of stormwater falling onto the urban environment to the Wastewater Treatment Plant for Enhanced Nutrient Removal technology.

Redevelopment/retrofit

Cumberland was selected as one of the Main Street Maryland-designated areas to participate in the BeSmart program. The local "Green Team", comprised of a variety of partners, is working to encourage owners to undertake energy efficiency-related improvements to their property.

Cumberland was selected as one of four Certified Local Governments to participate in a pilot program by the Maryland Historical Trust to conduct energy audits within designated historic structures in order to further connect the ability to make historic structures energy efficient without losing their architecturally significant features.

The new construction of the HRDC facility at 125 Virginia Avenue became the first LEED-certified project in Cumberland two years ago. The project was designated as one of Maryland's Smart Sites and serves as a catalyst for additional revitalization within the Virginia Avenue Corridor.

The City of Cumberland and its partners have advocated a buy local, shop local campaign for a number of years. One of the most visible events is the local Farmer's Market sponsored by Allegany Mountain Fresh Producers Association and now in its 21st year of serving the area. They are part of the Farmer's Market Nutrition Program and is part of the WIC Fruit and Vegetable Vouchers program/ WIC food vouchers for seniors. Cumberland has green canvas reusable bags that are sold at the markets to keep with the theme go green and to reinforce the Shop Local efforts. Shop Local events have included the Midnight Madness evening around the holidays.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(3) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the jurisdiction's current stormwater management practices and how these may affect the proposed SC Area. Is redevelopment and retrofitting of infrastructure an issue or opportunity in this SC Area? Stormwater runoff is a significant source of pollution to Maryland's streams and the Chesapeake Bay. Buildings constructed before 1985 have little or no stormwater controls, and development between 1985 and 2010 have some controls. Updated stormwater regulations passed by Maryland's General Assembly in 2010 require that development and redevelopment projects utilize stringent stormwater controls. Sustainable Community Areas may have opportunities for redevelopment practices that can reduce stormwater flows. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The majority of urban development within the City of Cumberland occurred in the first half of the twentieth century. The City encourages redevelopment efforts. All redevelopment projects are required to undergo stormwater management following the Stormwater Management Act of 2007.

All stormwater runoff throughout the City enters the combined sewer system and is either treated at the wastewater treatment plant or overflows to creeks or the Potomac River. As a result of the combined sewerage overflows (CSO) the City was issued a Consent Decree and Judgment in 2001. The CSO consent decree required the City to comply with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) CSO Control Policy. A Long Term Control Plan was developed, which outlines a plan of action to improve infrastructure to a point at which the City would be compliant with EPA's CSO Control Policy. Limitations were imposed on the amount of new sewer connections within the consent decree. The City is allowed up to 23,000 gallons per day in new sewer connections a year. Sewer connections greater than 23,000 gallons per day in a given year require prior approval by the Maryland Department of the Environment. By completing the list of improvements within the Long Term Control Plan the City expects to collect and transfer (by combined sewer) the majority of stormwater falling onto the City's urban environment to the Cumberland Wastewater Treatment Plant where treatment involving Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) technology currently exists.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

D. Economic Conditions & Access to Opportunity: Strengths and Weaknesses

(1) Describe the jurisdiction's current economic strengths and weaknesses. For example, are there distinct economic drivers in the area or region that will affect access to job opportunities and the progress of the SC Plan? What are the main barriers to the Area's economic competitiveness? What is the current level of broadband access available to serve residents, businesses and public facilities? What efforts are currently in place to increase worker skills and employment? Describe trends in employment rates and business formation.

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Economic Drivers

Cumberland has several factors that make it attractive for future job growth. Combined with a low cost of living, real estate prices are significantly lower than other areas. The city has an ample supply of water & sewer infrastructure to support new businesses - even for those that would require a large capacity and charges a minimal amount for a business to tap into the water & sewer lines. Cumberland is also fortunate to have two institutions of higher education - Allegany College of Maryland and Frostburg State University are tremendous assets in generating an educated workforce & attracting employers.

Barriers

The topography can be a major hurdle in identifying tracts of developable land. As the global economy continues to evolve, the jobs of today & tomorrow are associated with information technology or are highly dependent upon the use of technology for their operations. A major barrier is a current lack of broadband access at a reasonable cost for the business community. It is also difficult to attract these types of businesses to the area when the workforce does not possess the skill sets necessary to fill the job openings that would be created.

Broadband Access

According to the FCC Broadband.Gov website, approximately 91% of Allegany County's housing units are served by 4Mbps broadband availability. There is just under a \$1.5 million gap in broadband investment, or a \$499 per housing unit gap. There are approximately 2,000-5,000 housing units in Allegany County that are not served by a 4Mbps broadband connection.

In 1996, Allegany County, Allegany County Public Schools, Allegany County Library System, and the City of Cumberland, pooled resources totaling \$4.8 million to form the ALLCONET, or Allegany County Network, partnership. The partnership provides Internet & Intranet connectivity and related services to over 40 government entities & non-profit organizations. After a 2005 upgrade, the network began servicing some businesses & residents as well.

Workforce Development

The Allegany County Board of Education provides high school students the option of attending the Career Center. Business/Community Partners work closely with instructors to advise & assist in the development of curriculum that prepares students for successful careers in their chosen career paths. Students completing an occupational program may choose to continue training at two & four-year colleges or in an apprenticeship program.

Local educational institutions including ACM and FSU, work with area businesses to provide a range of educational options ranging from job-specific training and certification opportunities to Master's level graduate degrees. The local trades provide apprenticeship training for persons interested in the building trades.

The local Division of Workforce Development oversees the State's workforce programs, matching job seekers with employers, providing training opportunities and reporting on the needs and demands of the labor market. Other local agencies include the Western Maryland Consortium, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Maryland Department of Aging.

Trends

For several decades, Allegany County has had one of the highest unemployment rates in Maryland and depended upon the manufacturing & transportation industries to employ its citizens. The composition of job opportunities has been transformed. Following the national trend, manufacturing jobs have moved overseas & the quantity of jobs that were available in previous generations was substantially reduced. The area saw the loss of several major employers as well as several small to medium sized employers, causing many residents travel outside of the County to find work. This transformation has resulted in a local workforce that is no longer trained with necessary skills. Over the last two years, the unemployment rate has fluctuated between a low of 7.5% in Sept. 2009 to a high of 11.2% in Feb. 2010.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(2) Describe the jurisdiction's housing market and access to affordable workforce housing. What are the trends in residential construction (rental and homeownership), homeownership rate, foreclosure rate and, property values. Describe how and whether your jurisdiction's prevailing housing costs - both homeownership and rental - are affordable to households below 120% AMI, 80% AMI and 50% AMI. What efforts are in place currently to house individuals, families and the disabled at or below the AMI levels described above? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Residents of Cumberland have a variety of housing needs. Cumberland's existing housing stock is aged with most housing units constructed prior to 1970. Older housing stock requires significant and consistent maintenance, and the ability to maintain the housing stock is greatly impacted by the local economy.

Cumberland has a total of 11,084 housing units; 9,476 of which are occupied. According to the 2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates 57.5% of the units are owner occupied and 42.5% are renter occupied. 28% of Cumberland residents' incomes fall at 80% of MFI or below. While low income households are more likely to be renters, home owners with a mortgage have lower monthly costs as a percentage of their total household income.

There are approximately 4,068 total renter households residing within the city limits. Of these, approximately 38%, or 1,542 earn less than 30% of AMI. Approximately 68% of all renter households, whose incomes are between 0 to 30% AMI, have housing problems, which HUD defines as cost and severe cost burdened, overcrowding and/or without complete kitchen or plumbing facilities. Approximately 44 % of renter households between 0 to 30% AMI are severely cost burdened, and 68% are cost burdened, which is an alarming percentage. This indicates that more than half of all renter households within this income category are struggling to find decent affordable housing. This also indicates the need for additional rental housing options at this income level. Of the severe cost burdened and cost burdened households, all other households reported having the highest percentage at 55 and 74 % respectively. This is indicative of the need for extremely low income housing for large households.

Residents that fall within the very low-income range qualify for a variety of housing assistance programs. The City of Cumberland has a large Section 8 Housing Voucher Program, as well as two project based housing facilities for families and two for elderly and disabled. Residents can also apply for the Rental Assistance Program & Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program. The Housing Authority of the City of Cumberland owns and maintains the largest amount in separate developments and owns and operates Willow Valley Apartments- a public housing complex, offering 34 elderly/disabled congregate housing units.

Cumberland Neighborhood Housing Services provides homebuyer counseling services among the many services that they offer to the community. Based on CNHS information the homebuyers that purchased a home, 10% were below Very Low level of 30%, 38% were below Low level of 50% and 52% were below Moderate level of 80%. The homebuyers have increased however the average price has leveled off to make homes more affordable. CHNS has also found that credit issues and job stability are the two biggest factors for homebuyers. Another issue is lenders have tightened their lending guidelines because of the housing crisis that has evolved from all of the foreclosures.

Cumberland did not benefit from the housing boom of the late 1990's to 2007 and although the community has seen an increase in foreclosures, there have not been entire neighborhoods devastated by foreclosure activities. Initially Foreclosure activity was mostly limited to out of town speculators who purchased older properties turning them into multi-family rental units expecting the housing prices to rise in accordance with nationwide trends. The foreclosure clerk at the Circuit Court for Allegany County reports that from January 2011 through June 2011, 45 foreclosure cases were filed.

While the median sales value of homes in the Cumberland increased by \$15,000 from 2006 to 2007 according to the Maryland Department of Planning, the median value of a home in Cumberland is \$82,660 compared to \$146,000 in Maryland and \$119,600 nationwide.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(3) Describe the SC Area's demographic trends (with respect to age, race, household size, household income, educational attainment, or other relevant factors). *(Answer Space 4,000 characters)*

Households and Families: In 2006-2008 there were 9,500 households in the City of Cumberland. The average household size was 2.1 people.

Families made up 50% of the households. This includes both married-couple families (31%) and other families (19%). Non-family households made up 50% of all households in the City of Cumberland. Most of the nonfamily households were people living alone, but some were composed of people living in households in which no one was related to the householder.

Geographic Mobility: In 2006-2008, 83% of the people at least one year old living in Cumberland were living in the same residence one year earlier; 11% had moved during the past year from another residence in the same county, less than 0.5 percent from another county in Maryland, 6 percent moved from another state, and less than 0.5% from another country.

Education: In 2006-2008, 84% of people 25 years and over had at least graduated from high school and 15% had a bachelor's degree or higher. Sixteen percent were dropouts; they were not enrolled in school and had not graduated from high school.

The total school enrollment in Cumberland city was 3,900 in 2006-2008. Nursery school and kindergarten enrollment was 560 and elementary or high school enrollment was 2,500 children. College or graduate school enrollment was 830.

Industries: In 2006-2008, for the employed population 16 years and older, the leading industries in Cumberland city were educational services, health care, and social assistance, 27 percent, and Retail trade, 12 percent.

Occupations and Type of Employer: Among the most common occupations were: Sales and office occupations (30%); Service occupations (26%); Management, professional, and related occupations (25%); Construction, extraction, maintenance and repair occupations (10 percent); and Production, transportation, and material moving occupations (9 %). Seventy-six percent of the people employed were Private wage and salary workers; 20% was Federal, state, or local government workers; and 5% was Self-employed in own not incorporated business workers.

Travel to Work: Seventy-seven percent of Cumberland city workers drove to work alone in 2006-2008, 14% carpooled, 2% took public transportation, and 6% used other means. The remaining 1% worked at home. Among those who commuted to work, it took them on average 20 minutes to get to work.

Income: The median income of households in Cumberland city was \$30,105. Sixty-two percent of the households received earnings and 22% received retirement income other than Social Security. Forty-two percent of the households received Social Security. The average income from Social Security was \$12,695. These income sources are not mutually exclusive; that is, some households received income from more than one source.

Poverty & Participation in Government Programs: In 2006-2008, 19% of people were in poverty. Twenty percent of related children under 18 were below the poverty level, compared with 16% of people 65 years old and over. Fourteen percent of all families and 33% of families with a female householder and no husband present had incomes below the poverty level.

Occupied Housing Unit Characteristics: In 2006-2008, Cumberland city had 9,500 occupied housing units - 5,400 (58%) owner occupied and 4,000 (42%) renter occupied. Eight percent of the households did not have telephone service and 19% of the households did not have access to a car, truck, or van for private use. Twenty-seven percent had two vehicles and another 14% had three or more.

Housing Costs: The median monthly housing costs for mortgaged owners was \$936, non-mortgaged owners \$384, and renters \$506. Thirty-five percent of owners with mortgages, 27% of owners without mortgages, and 42% of renters in Cumberland city spent 30% or more of household income on housing.

III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS & PROJECTS

A. Organizational Structure:

Describe the Applicant's organizational structure. Specifically, which organizations are members in the Sustainable Communities Workgroup and who are the respective staff? Who are the leaders, and how will the Workgroup advisor or staff manage implementation of the SC Area Plan? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City of Cumberland is the lead entity for the Sustainable Communities overall structure and the Department of Community Development is the lead department within the City of Cumberland. Staff within this department, particularly the staff position of Historic Planner/Preservation Coordinator, will help to coordinate the implementation of the Sustainable Communities Area Plan and will work directly with the Sustainable Communities Workgroup to oversee the plan and requests for funding. All partners within the Sustainable Communities Workgroup provide an equal role within the group. The Sustainable Communities Workgroup is comprised of the following members:

Renee Bone – Executive Director, Canal Place Preservation and Development Authority

Jerri Dell – Citizen Representative

John DiFonzo – Director of Engineering, City of Cumberland

Becky Hadra - Director, Professional Development, Allegany College of Maryland

Steve Kesner – Executive Director, Housing Authority of the City of Cumberland

Raquel Ketterman – Environmental Specialist, City of Cumberland

Kathy McKenney – Historic Planner/Preservation Coordinator, City of Cumberland

Ed Mullaney – Downtown Manager, Main Street District

Jay Oliver – Community Development Manager, City of Cumberland

Rich Parsons – Executive Director, Cumberland Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc.

Jeff Rhodes – Acting City Administrator, City of Cumberland

Courtney Thomas – Executive Director, Human Resource Development Commission (HRDC)

III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS & PROJECTS

B.Organizational Experience:

Describe the Applicant organization's past experience in administering revitalization plans and projects. Describe the roles of the members of the Sustainable Communities Workgroup, including their experience in implementing revitalization initiatives. What are the strengths and challenges of the capacity of these groups with respect to implementation of the SC Plan? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City of Cumberland has extensive experience in administering revitalization plans and projects. City staff, particularly the Historic Planner/Preservation Coordinator, have successfully administered the Community Legacy program since 2001, often being cited by state program staff as providing excellent examples of successful projects and a long-term track record of providing all reporting documents, completing projects, and expending funds within given time-frames. Most members of the Cumberland Sustainable Communities Workgroup have been meeting for many years as the Cumberland Community Legacy Steering Committee so the group is transitioning to its current role while having previous experience in working together as a group to establish priorities and direct project funding for needed projects and programs.

III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS & PROJECTS

C. Public Input:

How did residents and other stakeholders in the community provide input to Action Plan described below in Section IV? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City of Cumberland has also been soliciting public input within the development of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan for which the Sustainable Communities Plan is closely tied. The City Planner has developed a neighborhood based focus, engaging over 100 citizens and staff in the process in order to ensure that the City's vision and its planning goals, objectives, and policies are based on a thorough knowledge and understanding of neighborhood needs.

Additionally, the Sustainable Communities Workgroup developed a public survey to help assist in prioritizing areas of greatest need. The survey was available online on the City of Cumberland's website, as well as in hardcopy in the City Hall information desk, at the Downtown Cumberland Farmers Market, and during the Downtown Cumberland Friday After Five events.

The surveys were collected at the end of the day on August 12, 2011. A series of questions was posed with respondents able to rank their answers from 1-5 with 5 weighed the highest on each response. When asked how Cumberland could improve the environment, the majority agreed or strongly agreed with beginning a curb-side recycling program; they somewhat agreed with providing incentives to construct rain gardens on surface lots; they agreed with implementing energy efficiency building codes; strongly agreed with encouraging "buy local" campaigns; agreed with planting more trees; and strongly agreed with converting street lighting to LED fixtures.

When asked to rate Cumberland's community assets, most ranked parks/playgrounds average or better; most ranked historic buildings and walking/biking trails good or excellent; the majority ranked schools at average to good; libraries at good to excellent; A&E District at good to excellent; shopping at fair to good; and dining at good to excellent.

Asked what Cumberland can do to encourage economic growth and competitiveness, many saw broadband access/availability as a need; a high number saw a need to work with educators/employers to expand job training opportunities, to provide revolving loan funds and small business start-up loans, and to improve the natural environment. The factor seen as the greatest need was to provide incentives to attract major retailers.

In terms of important factors when choosing a location of their home, neighborhood safety was seen as most important, followed by affordability, visual appearance of neighborhood, walkability, proximity to parks/playgrounds, and proximity to schools.

An almost equal number of respondents somewhat to strongly agreed to all options to describe Cumberland as a livable community, a welcoming community environment, a safe community, a good place to raise a family, and an affordable place to live.

When asked which infrastructure improvements will help make Cumberland more attractive for private investment, the majority of respondents saw street improvements and blight removal as the most important, followed by lighting and sidewalk improvements, and then in nearly equal levels of support for broadband improvements, water/sewer system improvements, parks/playgrounds/greenspace and convenient access to public transportation.

Two opportunities for the public to learn more about the plan and process were made available during meetings of the Cumberland Mayor and City Council. On August 2, 2011, an introduction to Sustainable Communities and the process being undertaken locally was described during the public meeting. On August 16, 2011, staff presented a request for the adoption of a local resolution providing support by the Mayor and City Council to designate the proposed Sustainable Communities boundaries and to authorize the plan. Additional opportunity for public comment was available during this meeting, as well.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

The Sustainable Community Action Plan (SC Plan or Plan) is meant to be a multi-year investment strategy - a strategic set of revitalization initiatives and projects that local partners believe will increase the economic vitality and livability of their community, increased prosperity for local households and improved health of the surrounding environment. The Plan should be flexible enough to be updated regularly and renewed every five years as the community envisions new goals. The priority initiatives and projects in the SC Plan should improve the livability of community places -- residential, commercial, or other public or private properties - and create new work, retail, recreational and housing opportunities for residents. These projects should also reduce the environmental impact of the community through water and energy resource conservation and management strategies. In this way, the Plan can be a road map for local stakeholders as well as State agencies to work together to create a more a sustainable and livable community.

A. Supporting existing communities & reducing environmental impacts.

(1) A community's approach to Smart Growth generally includes two inter-related areas of focus: encouraging reinvestment and growth in existing communities; and, discouraging growth that degrades natural resources, and farms and rural landscapes. Broadly describe your jurisdiction's Smart Growth approach and any significant accomplishments made over the last decade or so. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Goal

Reinforce Cumberland's historic land use pattern while encouraging compatible economic development.

Objective

Building on Cumberland's existing land use pattern, guide development and redevelopment activities to achieve a balance of residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed uses; community facilities; and open space and recreation areas.

Action

Maintain and update a Future Land Use Plan depicting the desired general pattern of residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed uses; community facilities; and open space and recreation areas.

Action

Amend regulatory mechanisms such as the Zoning Ordinance and Map as necessary to implement the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Plan (update expected by 2013).

Action

Evaluate future land use policy and regulatory decisions for consistency with the Future Land Use Plan.

Objective

Promote land uses in the downtown which strengthen its traditional role as a regional center, in the context of an economic development strategy focused on tourism, specialty retail, cultural arts, and financial services.

Action

Work with the Downtown Development Commission to maintain first floors of downtown buildings in retail, service, and related customer-oriented uses, through approaches such as incentives and marketing.

Action

Continue to work with the Downtown Development Commission to promote the conversion of vacant and underutilized upper floors of downtown buildings to residential and other viable uses through the application of existing building codes, incentives, marketing, etc., building upon previous successes.

Action

Encourage uses related to the visual and performing arts in the downtown, including artists' live-work spaces.

Action

Encourage governmental agencies to remain or locate in new offices as tenants in the downtown.

Objective

Encourage redevelopment of vacant and underutilized developed properties where compatible with adjacent land uses.

Action

Promote use of the Rehabilitation and Redevelopment Floating Zone District and other approaches to encourage appropriate redevelopment of vacant and underutilized developed properties.

Action

In cooperation with local realtors, develop and maintain an inventory of vacant and underutilized developed properties as a tool for use in promoting appropriate redevelopment opportunities

Action

Initiate discussions with realtors and owners of key vacant and underutilized developed properties to explore the City's role in promoting appropriate redevelopment.

Objective

Encourage appropriate uses of undeveloped land.

Action

Continue to increase the City's supply of undeveloped land suitable for development through annexation.

Action

Pursue innovative approaches to developing vacant land that provide "niches" not currently offered (e.g., cluster, assisted living, mixed-use development) while meeting other Comprehensive Plan objectives such as attracting new residents and protecting sensitive environmental resources

Action

In cooperation with local realtors, develop and maintain an inventory of undeveloped properties, including information on development suitability (e.g., presence of steep slopes or access to utilities), as a tool in promoting appropriate development opportunities

Action

Initiate discussions with realtors and owners of key undeveloped properties to explore the City's role in promoting appropriate development.

Cumberland has experienced notable Smart Growth-related accomplishments over the last decade or so. One of the most impactful projects that arose was the Upper Story Redevelopment program. Modest public incentive programs helped to leverage significant private investment to encourage residential and some commercial reuses of the vastly underutilized upper story spaces in the downtown. This merged with the growing Arts and Entertainment District that helped to continue to encourage the reuse of existing resources.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) Describe any major investments in community infrastructure -water, stormwater, sewer, sidewalk, lighting, etc. -- that must be undertaken in order to improve the readiness or competitiveness of the proposed SC Area for private investment and compliance (if applicable) with TMDL regulations. Addressing the stormwater during redevelopment can reduce the pollution entering our streams and contribution to the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. Investments in infrastructure, generally, can be an important catalyst for new private investment in the community. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Roads:

Goal

To achieve a pavement quality index of 7 or higher on all arterial and collector streets

Objective

Dedicate funding in the amount of \$3 million per year to roadway improvements

Action

Leverage funding sources to supplement and/or increase the funding available for road improvement projects

Goal

Modernize the City's road system by integrating pedestrian/bikeways, updating traffic signage and lane markings, improving the traffic signal system and the street lighting system

Objective

Include pedestrian/bicycle improvements, as well as ADA standards within all new roadway design projects

Action

Install bicycle friendly drainage grates

Action

Integrate bike lanes, cross walks, and sidewalk/curb ramps to the maximum extent possible in roadway improvement projects

Objective

Bring all traffic signage and lane markings up to current FHWA standards

Action

Complete data collection and inventory of traffic signage

Action

Develop and action plan and a replacement schedule for systematic improvements approach to traffic signs and lane marking

Objective

Implement a community wayfinding Plan in accordance with Maryland SHA Tourist Area Corridor (TAC) sign guidelines

Action

Implement a planning study that lays out a complete guide sign system that meets the needs of the tourism signing concept

Action

Leverage resources for purchase and installation of approved guide sign system

Objective

Modernize the City's traffic signal and the street lighting systems to increase energy efficiency

Action

Develop energy efficient standard requirements to be followed when conducting scheduled maintenance and/or updating of

the City's traffic signal and the street lighting systems

Sewer Collection/Water Distribution:

Goal

Increase overall reliability of the sewer collection and water distribution systems

Objective

Develop and adopt a functional capital improvements plan that addresses the needs of the Utilities Division of the Public Works Department

Action

Create a database and data input schedule in order to develop a replacement program in which weaknesses in the piping systems are addressed and repairs/replacements are conducted in a prioritized manner

Stormwater:

Goal

Accomplish the projects within City of Cumberland's Long Term Control Plan in order to achieve an 85% reduction of total combined sewer overflow volume.

Objective

Construct a CSO storage facility

Action

Receive approval from MDE for the 2011 CSO Storage Facility Pre-design Report

Action

Obtain funding for the design phase for the CSO Storage Facility

Action

Design the CSO Storage Facility, while working to develop a funding package for the construction phase for the CSO Storage Facility

Action

Construct the CSO Storage Facility

Objective

Collect and carry excess combined sewage from Howard Street/Mill Race to the Wastewater Treatment Plant

Action

Work with local, State, and Federal agencies and property owners to devise a strategy for ideal routing and placement of a new 78" pipeline that will convey wastewater to the proposed CSO Storage Facility

Action

Obtain funding for the design phase of the 78" wastewater pipeline

Action

Design the 78" wastewater pipeline, while working to develop a funding package for the construction phase for the 78" wastewater pipeline

Action

Construct the 78" wastewater pipeline

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) Describe policies, initiatives or projects that the community will undertake or expand in order to reduce the SC Area's impact on the environment. Examples include but are not limited to: conservation or management of stormwater through retrofitting of streets and by-ways (Green Streets, rain gardens, etc.); retrofitting of facilities and homes for energy conservation; implementation of "green" building codes and mixed-use zoning; recycling of waste; clean-ups of watersheds; and, encouragement of "Buy Local" approaches that benefit local suppliers and food producers. A comprehensive menu of such actions may be found through the nonprofit Sustainable Maryland Certified initiative. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Goal

Encourage voluntary implementation of bioretention structures

Objective

Develop/support public programs for the use of rain gardens/rain barrels

Actions

- Develop a survey for locations suitable for bioretention structures
- Identify funding for implementation of a bioretention program for areas identified in the survey
- Develop demonstration facilities on public property
- Initiate a community rain garden tour/rain barrel design contest

Goal

Encourage reduction/reuse/recycling to reduce waste material entering the landfill; increase local recycling collection

Objective

Promote back yard composting to reduce the amount of waste entering the landfill; encourage a reduction in use of commercial fertilizers

Actions

- Increase awareness of the U of M Extension Master Gardeners program
- Hold community workshops on back yard composting
- Identify a funding source to assist with costs of composting tools

Goal

Implement policies that encourage the use of recycled materials in capital improvements

Objective

Consider use of recycled materials in reconstruction projects while maintaining compliance with all local, state & federal codes/ standards

Action

Modify project contracts to encourage recycled materials

Objective

Assist Allegany County in investigating the feasibility of single stream recyclable collection

Actions

- Research/market single stream collection facilities
- Identify a single stream collection facility/conduct a feasibility study for transporting local commodity
- Initiate single stream recycling collection
- Study feasibility of a curbside single stream collection service

Goal

Remove barriers within the Potomac River for stream restoration

Objective

Remove the Potomac Industrial Dam to open up natural stream flow for aquatic habitat & recreation

Actions

- Identify resources for successful dam removal project
- Complete feasibility study/design specifications for the dam removal project
- Remove the dam
- Enhance boater recreation

Goal

Participate in long-term forest management within the Evitts Creek Watershed to enhance/sustain drinking water quality

Objective

Evaluate opportunities available to apply a conservation easement to the City water company property

Actions

- Coordinate with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy to participate in conservation programs
- Revise Forest Stewardship Plan for the water company property
- Implement land management & timber harvesting activities

Objective

Partner with Bedford County Conservation District & the Allegany Soil Conservation District to complete a Watershed Management Plan for Evitts Creek

Actions

- Create a subcommittee of the Evitts Creek Steering Committee to develop a plan leading to a Watershed Management Plan for Evitts Creek
- Partner with conservation groups to facilitate planning meetings for property owners within the Evitts Creek watershed
- Promote development of a bi-state watershed interest group

Goal

Install energy savings & risk management reduction improvements within major utility facilities

Objective

Incorporate energy savings & risk management reduction within capital improvements plan for major utility facilities

Actions

- Conduct energy audits within the WWTP & WFP
- Include energy efficiency improvements cost analyses within engineering studies/designs
- Evaluate the opportunity of installing alternative energy generating capture technology infrastructure within the plants
- Study the feasibility & affordability of implementing disinfection alternatives at the WWTP and WFP

Goal

Continue to provide team assistance to residents/businesses for energy efficiency

Objective

Improve energy efficiency of buildings; increase the number of LEED-certified projects

Actions

- Provide technical support for incentives, including the BeSmart program
- Work with energy companies to increase awareness of services such as energy audits

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The community groups or stakeholders who will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section include the City of Cumberland Public Safety Department, Public Works Department (Utilities and Engineering Divisions), Department of Community Development, Cumberland Green Team, Potomac Edison, Columbia Gas, Maryland Department of the Environment, U.S Environmental Protection Agency, Evitts Creek Steering Committee, Allegany County Planning Services and Public Works Departments, Allegany County Soil Conservation District, Bedford County Conservation District, PA, Cumberland Valley Township, PA, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (or other conservation group with Technical Assistance programs), Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Pennsylvania Game Commission, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), American Rivers, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Environmental Community Groups, Waste Haulers (Western Maryland Waste Systems [Interstate Waste Systems], Burgmeier Waste Hauling, etc...), Recycling companies (Waste Management Recycle America), University of Maryland Extension of Allegany County, Let's Beautify Cumberland, Cumberland Garden Club, Allegany Arts Council

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

B. Valuing communities and neighborhoods -- building upon assets and building in amenities:

(1) What are the key assets that exist in the community upon which the Plan's projects and initiatives will build? Assets may include physical assets such as parks and historic structures and also civic and economic assets such as employers, educational institutions, and cultural organizations and activities. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City of Cumberland is fortunate to have many existing assets that will provide a strong foundation for future projects and initiatives. These assets include: a thriving Arts & Entertainment District, a strong Main Street Community, an evolving Certified Heritage Area, a National Historical Park, Allegany College of Maryland, and Frostburg State University. In addition to these economic assets, the City's infrastructure is an asset in and of itself. Historically, the City has had a capacity much greater than in existence today, and this provides a great opportunity for future growth and redevelopment.

In the Comprehensive Plan's Vision for the Year 2020, the City of Cumberland is recognized as:

"Cumberland: A City that is an excellent place to live, an enjoyable place to visit, and a supportive place to build a profitable business. The City's special resources - a strong sense of community, safe environment, rich history, and splendid natural setting - provide the key to a vital and prosperous future. Canal Place and the downtown draw visitors to Cumberland to experience the historic C&O Canal, Arts and Cultural District, and other local and regional attractions, spurring economic development. Economic opportunity is further expanded by public and private sector cooperation, state-of the art telecommunications, and a spirit of entrepreneurship harkening back to Cumberland's industrial heritage. The City's actions to strengthen existing neighborhoods, provide new housing choices, and preserve key environmental resources make it an ever more desirable place to live for current and new residents alike. The Plan elaborates on this vision in a physical concept acknowledging the City's key historic, visual, natural, and recreational resources. Equally important are more intangible qualities such as a positive community identity, low crime rate, active and supportive social institutions, and a hardworking, skilled, and productive workforce. In the Vision for 2020, the City builds upon these and other community assets to make Cumberland an exceptional place to live, visit, and build a business."

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) What policies, initiatives or projects will reuse or enhance the historical assets, traditional business districts/Main Streets and cultural resources of the community? What actions will reinforce your community's authentic "sense of place" and historic character? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Goal

Ensure protection of the visual & architectural integrity of historic sites and districts throughout Cumberland. Develop a balanced approach to preserving and enhancing significant historic & visual resources in the context of a City-wide strategy that encourages appropriate economic development.

Action

Determine whether updates are needed to the Preservation District Design and Preservation Guidelines for the zoned historic district, particularly to incorporate sustainability guidelines. Ensure consistency with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.

Action

Work with area stakeholders to determine applicability of design guidelines within neighborhoods.

Action

Explore the designation of additional districts to the National Register of Historic Places, or local designation. Provide technical assistance and information to property owners in these areas to ensure that they are educated about the benefits of designation.

Action

Support the Canal Place Preservation and Development Authority in implementing actions to preserve, enhance, and interpret the historic resources of the Heritage Area.

The City of Cumberland has partnered with the CPPDA and the National Park Service to undertake an in depth planning project that will incorporate future growth and development strategies for the heritage area. Stakeholders from federal, state, county and municipal governments; as well as other local partners across a broad range of disciplines will be involved in creating a common set of goals and objectives. As part of this project a theme or brand will be developed, which will better communicate historic character and "sense of place".

Goal

Maintain and improve the visual character of Cumberland's gateway entrances and corridors.

Action

Develop and install directional signage.

Goal

Continue to implement an economic development strategy for the downtown to strengthen its position as a regional center for tourism, specialty retail, and financial services.

Action

Continue to work with the Downtown Development Commission and CPPDA to maximize private sector development, including enhanced physical and programmatic connections.

Goal

Continue to grow under the Main Street Maryland Five Points Approach.

Actions

Design - enhance the physical appearance of the commercial district by rehabilitating historic buildings, encouraging supportive new construction, developing sensitive design management systems, & long-term planning;

Organization - seek to build consensus & cooperation among the many groups and individuals who have a role in the revitalization process;

Promotion - support marketing the traditional commercial district's assets to customers, potential investors, new businesses, local citizens & visitors;

Economic Restructuring -strengthen the district's existing economic base while finding ways to expand it to meet new

opportunities & challenges from outlying development; and
Clean, Safe, and Green - enhance the perception of a neighborhood through the principles of Smart Growth & sustainability.

Goal

Continue to grow and build upon the Maple Street Initiatives within the Virginia Avenue Corridor

Action

Encourage residential revitalization projects near the business district that strengthen the relationship between downtown commercial districts and the surrounding neighborhoods, as well as to bring a holistic approach to community revitalization.

Goal

Work with Arts and Entertainment District partners, including the Allegany Arts Council

Action

Expand arts programming, support existing artists and art businesses, recruit new artists, establish new art businesses, support/promote tourism and economic development efforts, facilitate collaborations among community stakeholders, and improve "quality of life" for area residents

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) Describe policies, initiatives or projects that will increase community access to green spaces, parks and other amenities? A community can gain social and physical benefits from access to a healthy natural environment. The inclusion of complete streets, trails, green space, parks and trees contribute to the character and health of a community. Examples might include improvements to the tree canopy by planting street trees, improving local neighborhood streams, or reusing a vacant lot for a new community park or playground.*(Answer Space 4,000 characters)*

Tree Canopy

Goal

Increase the tree canopy by 2 – 10% within urbanized areas

Objective

Revise and adopt plans and strategies that will encourage tree planting and preservation

Action

Adopt the Urban Tree Canopy Program Strategic Implementation Strategy Plan

Action

Revise/update the Community (Urban) Forestry Plan

Action

Amend ordinances to include guidelines for tree planting and promote functional uses of trees within large scale projects

Action

Revise the Comprehensive Plan to introduce the concept of urban tree canopy as a green infrastructure component

Objective

Develop programs that facilitate residential tree planting

Action

Develop a program to provide free or low cost trees to homeowners

Action

Develop a citizen's stewardship program targeting large residential lots and/or reforestation projects

Action

Promote a reward program to publicize correct tree planting & maintenance by local property owners and businesses

Neighborhood streams

Goal

Assess and inventory neighborhood streams

Objective

Identify perennial & ephemeral stream restoration projects

Action

Work with educational institutions to identify an acceptable stream assessment tool

Action

Identify & leverage funding resources to carry out stream assessments & public outreach programs

Action

Organize community groups to conduct stream assessments

Action

Conduct educational outreach programs for urban watersheds

Parks and Recreation

Goal

Continue to strive to enhance the quality of life by offering a wide variety of high quality, safe, accessible, & affordable recreation activities and facilities that meet the year-round needs of area residents of all interests, age groups, & abilities.

Action

Implement the recommendations of the 2002 Comprehensive Plan for Parks and Recreation:

- *facility repair, maintenance, and improvements as identified;
- *increased partnering with other providers, civic organizations, & neighborhood groups
- *deactivation of least used, deficient facilities;
- *discontinuation of programs for which there is limited demand & establishment of new ones based upon community interest and support by user fees; and
- *pursuit of a multi-faceted funding strategy

Goal

Coordinate with Trail Towns Program goals to make the city one of the revitalized trailside communities along the Great Allegheny Passage.

Objective

Provide tools to "reap the economic benefits of trail-based tourism & recreation as part of a larger, coordinated approach to regional economic development."

Action

Retain existing businesses, Expand and increase revenues of existing businesses, recruit sustainable new businesses, adopt & integrate the Trail Town vision.

2008 Trails and Bikeway Master Plan

Goal: Bicycle Routes

Objective: Establish a bicycle transportation network that links neighborhoods, local and tourist destinations, & provides recreational & transportation opportunities for residents & tourists.

Goal: Bicycle Amenities

Objective: Provide bicycle amenities so local residents and tourists are able to easily navigate comfortably & conveniently explore businesses & attractions

Goal: Encouragement

Objective: Establish Cumberland as a welcoming place that provides safe recreation & alternative transportation bicycling routes, encourages bicycle use, provides incentives for bicycle related events for local residents & tourists, and considers bicycle needs in related projects.

Goal: Education and Safety

Objective: Create a safe environment for bicycle travel through increased enforcement of traffic laws and continued education & training of cyclists and motorists on safely sharing the road.

The planning initiative between the City of Cumberland, CPPDA, and the National Park Service will address community access to green spaces, parks & other community amenities that are important to the success of the heritage area & Downtown Cumberland.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Allegany Arts Council, Allegany College of Maryland, Allegany County Government, Allegany County Tourism, Canal Place Preservation & Development Authority, City of Cumberland, Cumberland Main Street Program, Downtown Development Commission, Frostburg State University, Maryland Department of Business & Economic Development, Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development, Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, Maryland Historical Trust, Mountain Maryland Trails, National Park Service, State Highway Administration, Trail Towns, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Allegany County Soil Conservation District, Center for Watershed Protection (technical assistance).

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

C. Enhancing economic competitiveness

(1) What economic development policies, initiatives or projects will improve the economy through investments in small businesses and other key employment sectors? What economic development and business incentives will you build upon or implement as part of the SC Plan? Examples could include but are not limited to: green-taping for expedited project application review; permitting and inspection; job training; business tax credits; and, revolving loan funds. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Goal

Develop a coordinated, public/private sector economic development strategy focused on promoting business start-up and development.

Action

Work with the Economic Development Commission to define a comprehensive economic development strategy. Building upon the directions of entrepreneurship, heritage tourism, & quality of life set by the Comprehensive Plan, this strategy should address the following:

- diversify the City's economy through appropriate target "niches";
- leverage the City's resources through partnerships to promote business startup, development, recruitment, retention, & expansion;
- explore the formation of private, non-profit organization to increase access to private sector resources & capital;
- integrate economic development, housing improvement, & marketing in a comprehensive strategy;
- develop locally-based principles of sustainability (e.g., retaining & attracting businesses that commit to "investing in community");
- Position & market the city for the growing trend of Rural-Sourcing;
- Develop and attract regional businesses currently not in the City;
- Attract & develop Post-Secondary Education institutions and facilities
- Concentrate efforts to sustain Downtown Cumberland as the entertainment, cultural, & corporate hub; and
- Target the Willowbrook Road corridor for health care & additional medical businesses/providers.

Action

Work with the local school system, colleges, & universities to promote and support economic development, including educational & training programs that teach skills to succeed in the 21st century economy & on-the-job training/placement programs for graduates that connect to opportunities in the area's employment market

Goal

Implement regulatory & fiscal policies that facilitate business start-up & development.

Action

Monitor development regulations for opportunities to make it easier to start & operate businesses.

Action

Promote use of the home occupation provisions of the Zoning Ordinance for start-ups of entrepreneurial businesses in homes in residential areas.

Action

Continue to develop coordinated & streamlined review /approval procedures for commercial development applications. Address permit fee structures to ensure the City is competitive.

Action

Target investment in public infrastructure to serve economic development sites.

Goal

Continue to implement a strategy for the downtown to strengthen its position as a regional center for tourism, specialty retail, & financial service.

Action

Work with the Downtown Development Commission & Canal Place Preservation and Development Authority to maximize

private sector development, including enhanced physical & programmatic connections within & between the downtown to adjacent neighborhoods & promote/ increase the range of activities & economic vitality of the downtown.

Goal

Continue to implement a revitalization strategy for the Virginia Avenue corridor.

Action

Conduct a study to define 1) the proper niche for the Virginia Avenue corridor in the market and 2) a strategy to maximize the corridor's long-term economic development potential.

Action

Work with property owners to implement the revitalization strategy for the Virginia Avenue corridor, including encouraging startups of new businesses & use of available programs and incentives for business improvements.

Goal

Market Cumberland as a good place to visit, live, and start or operate a business.

Action

Focus on two inter-related elements- make the City a heritage tourism destination; and build job opportunities/income for residents by encouraging entrepreneurs to start & develop new businesses.

Action

As government resources continue to dwindle, ensure that the network of business leaders, such as the Cumberland-Allegany County Industrial Foundation, continue to provide the business community with the resources necessary to promote additional growth & job creation.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) What workforce development policies, initiatives or projects will increase access to jobs and economic opportunity for residents in the SC Area? Do you have a goal for job creation? Are green jobs an opportunity in the jurisdiction or SC Area? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Work with area partners, including educational, to help train a qualified and skilled workforce. Frostburg State University has undertaken several initiatives to attract green jobs and initiatives to Allegany County. The University is a conduit to research in green technology and will generate a workforce that will allow Allegany County to attract these types of businesses and jobs. The University and Allegany College of Maryland also have programs in place that allow them to respond to employer training needs very quickly. Allegany College of Maryland is renowned for its ability to customize training programs to meet the individual needs of private and public sector employers across the State. The partnership between local economic development professionals and our institutions of higher education have resulted in several businesses choosing to locate in Allegany County and the City of Cumberland over the years.

Objective

Support development of a quality education system that equips students and trains adults to succeed in the twenty-first century work force.

Action

Support the Board of Education of Allegany County in implementing the Master Plan for School Facilities, including recommendations for maintenance of and improvements to the existing public schools within the City of Cumberland.

Action

Support the Board of Education of Allegany County in providing programs such as career and technology education that teach students skills that will be in demand in the twenty-first century economy.

Action

Support Allegany College of Maryland and other providers of business development and employment training courses for adults, including the teaching of skills required to succeed in the entrepreneurial job market.

Action

Support Allegany College of Maryland and other providers of specialized training and certification programs for preservation trades training and "green" jobs.

Broadband Needs:

Local elected officials are currently engaged in discussions with the Maryland Department of Information Technology regarding the best ways to use existing fiber in the region, whether for public or private purposes, in an attempt to diminish the digital divide. The One Maryland Broadband Network, through an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant, is working to bring broadband connections to underserved regions of the state, including Western Maryland. Despite the existence of fiber and planned new broadband connections, last mile internet service provision for public agencies, businesses, and residents will be needed at a competitive cost. Median income of area residents as well as sizes of businesses should be considered to ensure opportunities that arise are affordable. And, these opportunities require marketing to inform the community of the choices available.

Furthermore, the ALLCONET wireless infrastructure on which so many government entities, non-profit agencies, citizens, and businesses rely is aging. Grant funding in 2005 provided the last major investment in network hardware. Equipment deployed six to ten years ago will require hardware replacements/upgrades to meet the demands of evolving technology as well as the needs of network users.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) Describe whether the Sustainable Community will be impacted by the Base Re-alignment and Closure (BRAC) activities in Maryland. If impacted, how do the initiatives and projects in your Plan complement BRAC-related growth? (If not applicable, all ten points will be assessed based on answers to questions 1, 2, and 4) (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Cumberland Sustainable Community will not be directly impacted by the Base Re-alignment and Closure (BRAC) activities in Maryland.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Allegany College of Maryland, Allegany County Government, City of Cumberland, Cumberland-Allegany County Industrial Foundation, Cumberland Main Street Program, Frostburg State University, Maryland Department of Business & Economic Development, Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development, Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulation, SCORE Small Business Development Center, Tri-County Council for Western Maryland, Western Maryland Consortium

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

D. Promoting access to quality affordable housing.

(1) What housing policies, initiatives or projects will expand housing choices - rental and homeownership -- for people of a range of ages, incomes, and also for disabled individuals? How will these actions address the current housing conditions and needs noted in Section II? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Goal

Promote a healthy, diversified housing stock for people of all ages, incomes, and levels of need.

Action

Continue & strengthen/expand programs for the rehabilitation of homeowner & rental units.

Action

Support continuation & expansion of programs that make housing available to first time home buyers

Action

Encourage housing renovation throughout older neighborhoods with support of public / non-profit housing providers. Potential strategies include local tax credits or deferred taxation for rehabilitation and improvements, working with financial institutions to increase availability of home mortgages to persons of modest means, & use existing building codes to provide compatible rehabilitation.

Action

Encourage residents of designated historic districts to take advantage of federal & state historic preservation tax credits.

In-fill Redevelopment

Goal

Undertake demonstration projects to show how in-fill development can work within City neighborhoods.

Action

Encourage the construction of housing units on vacant/ underutilized properties, return city-owned lots to the private market, work with housing providers to promote new construction on vacant lots for first time homebuyers, provide incentives such as local tax credits, & deferred taxation, & establish standards to ensure that the infill development is compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Goal

Develop a coordinated public/ private approach to reduce the number of vacant/ blighted properties

Action

Work with local housing agencies on the development of a Land Bank Authority - typically created by local ordinance pursuant to state enabling legislation. These entities usually have the primary responsibility and authority for acquiring, maintaining, or selling abandoned property.

Action

Continue to engage residents and allow for a coordinated multi-departmental approach to resolving neighborhood issues, including code enforcement, public safety, & public works.

Action

Continue to seek funding to demolish structures that cannot be salvaged & which are under the City's legal control.

Workforce Housing

Develop initiatives that are tailored to work in the community, combining strategies for new construction & for rehabilitation of existing building stock. Work with area partners to provide programs to assist homebuyers, particularly critical workers such as first responders, firefighters, police officers, educators, & government employees to find homes in the community. Workforce housing has been identified as 80 to 120% of median income of the community.

Affordable Housing

Families who pay more than 30% of their income for housing are considered cost burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation & medical care. As stated in the City of Cumberland's CDBG Consolidated Plan, "Affordability or credit issues often times serve as barriers to those with lower incomes. Those who own homes are often faced with undertaking rehabilitation projects, which in most cases, are financially unattainable to the average homeowner.

Goal

Provide affordable housing and continued housing assistance to those in need.

Action

In accordance with the Consolidated Plan, continue to support housing assistance programs and coordinate the efforts of providers to increase efficiency, reduce duplication of services, & better serve clients.

Action

Work with service providers to implement the housing needs of the homeless /special needs populations, including helping homeless persons obtain/ retain affordable housing, assisting persons at-risk from becoming homeless, & increasing the supply of supportive housing to serve at-risk / special needs populations.

Action

Continue assistance programs for renters with low/extremely low incomes.

Action

Improve programs to assist persons unable to maintain their properties due to income or physical limitations

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) Will these housing initiatives or projects increase access to transit or community walkability and/or decrease transportation costs? In other words, will the housing investments result in more people living near work or town centers, or able to more conveniently reach work, school, shopping and/or recreation?*(Answer Space 4,000 characters)*

The housing initiatives and projects will serve to continue to reinvest in Cumberland's existing neighborhoods, thereby increasing the number of persons who can access existing forms of transportation and hopefully increasing demand so that additional transportation routes can be made available. Cumberland's town center is surrounded by a number of neighborhoods that are very walkable so with the correct combination of improvements to the existing housing stock, strategic infill housing opportunities, and infrastructure improvements, more people should be willing to walk or bike to their destinations instead of solely relying on the use of automobiles.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) What is your goal for of number of units to be created of affordable workforce housing, rental and homeownership? What populations (by income or special needs) will benefit from this increased access to affordable housing? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The City of Cumberland's 2010-2014 CDBG Five Year Consolidated Action Plan seeks to increase access to affordable owner housing by 20 units per year. The goal to increase the supply of affordable rental housing is fifty-five units over a five year period. The goal to improve the range of housing options for persons with special needs is fifteen housing units per year.

According to data compiled by the City of Cumberland's Community Development Block Grant staff a number of persons with special needs, including the elderly, frail elderly, persons with severe mental illness, physically and developmentally disabled, alcohol or drug addicted, persons with HIV/AIDS and their families, and public housing residents are all not able to adequately obtain housing. Of the 1792 persons with special needs, 434 could not obtain adequate housing. These persons will benefit from an increased access to affordable housing.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section? *(Answer Space 4,000 characters)*

City of Cumberland Department of Community Development, Cumberland Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc., Housing Authority of the City of Cumberland, Human Resources Development Commission, local realtors

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

E. Support transportation efficiency and access.

(1) What policies, strategies and projects are envisioned to strengthen the transportation network that affects the proposed SC Area? How will these initiatives support transportation choices (including walking, bicycling, bus or rail transit, and carpooling) or otherwise promote an efficient transportation network that integrates housing and transportation land uses? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Goal

Provide a safe and efficient transportation network, with an emphasis on improving circulation within Cumberland and connections to outside regions.

Action

Evaluate progress made in implementing the traffic recommendations. Update the recommendations by identifying & programming vehicular access and circulation priorities for the next five years

Objective

Maintain and improve traffic flow & quality of travel within the City.

Action

Continue a program to prioritize and address problem intersections. Implement improvements to eliminate hazards & to make traffic flow more efficient, considering provisions for other modes of transportation, such as pedestrian, bicycle, & transit.

Objective

Provide adequate parking to serve the Canal Place Preservation District (including the downtown) and other destinations for visitors & residents.

Action

Update the existing and projected parking supply/demand calculations as a basis for identifying & programming parking priorities for the next five years.

Action

Continue efforts to inform residents & visitors on the availability of parking in the downtown & other districts.

Objective

Provide public transit service to meet the mobility needs of residents & provide alternatives to use of the automobile.

Action

Work with the Allegany County Transit & other partners to improve the existing public transit system, including:

- enhancement of the current route structure;
- explore the potential to provide a loop shuttle service, making use of large, underutilized parking lots, to multiple employment and/or shopping destinations;
- Coordinate with colleges/universities to provide scheduled transit service between campus & downtown;
- improvements to bus facilities (e.g., shelters, kiosks with schedules & maps); and
- public outreach to promote the benefits of public transportation.

Action

Work with the Allegany County Transit and other providers to develop & implement a coordinated transportation plan to increase effectiveness & eliminate duplication of services among agencies that provide transportation related to employment, child care, elderly & special needs.

Objective

Promote pedestrian and bicycle travel as alternatives to the automobile & as a recreational activity for visitors & residents.

Action

Develop a strategy to target sidewalk improvements based upon condition and role in neighborhood revitalization.

Action

Establish designated bikeways or bicycle compatible roadways where feasible as part of street reconstruction projects.

Action

Where feasible, improve the compatibility of streets for bicycles by replacing any remaining older drainage grates, providing wide curb lanes and/or smooth shoulders, & eliminating roadside hazards.

Action

Make every effort to retrofit existing sidewalks to allow for radii at the curbs to be lowered to allow for ADA access.

Despite its topography, Cumberland is a fairly walkable community; however a number of enhancements are needed to make transportation more efficient and safe. A greater number of persons should be willing to use alternative modes of transportation if they are perceived as convenient, accessible, and affordable. Linkages between destinations must be clear in order for greater utilization. Enhancing access to the transportation system should continue to be implemented & duplicated in other mixed-use neighborhoods. Duplicating key enhancements such as bus shelters and kiosks with bus schedules, maps, thematic benches, trash receptacles, lighted walkways, landscaping and improved signage will assist in creating a system that is comfortable for residents and visitors alike. All modes of transportation must be enhanced, including vehicular, pedestrian, & bicycle. With the improvements to the business climate in the downtown, consideration should be given to address parking issues, including shuttling employees to businesses from satellite locations.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) If applicable, describe the SC Area's connection or proximity to transportation centers (e.g. Metro, MARC, and light rail stations) and describe opportunities for Transit - Oriented Development (TOD). Will Plan strategies and projects contribute to jobs/housing balance or otherwise provide a mix of land uses that can be expected to reduce reliance on single-occupancy automobiles? (If transit or TOD is not applicable in your community, all points in this section will be based on questions 1 and 3) (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Although Cumberland is not a designated Transit Oriented Development (TOD) community, there are opportunities to improve access to the Metropolitan areas. Amtrak currently provides daily access between Washington, D.C. to Chicago, IL on the Capitol Limited line. Continued exploration should be made to improve passenger rail service and access to larger transportation centers.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section? *(Answer Space 4,000 characters)*

City of Cumberland Department of Community Development, Engineering Department, Department of Public Works, Allegany County Transit Authority, Trail Towns, Maryland Department of Planning, Local colleges and universities, Chamber of Commerce, Allegany County Tourism, Citizen groups.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

F. Coordinating and Leveraging Policies and Investment

(1) What specific steps will the Sustainable Community Workgroup take to coordinate policies and funding streams to remove barriers to investment and maximize and increase funding in the proposed Sustainable Community Area? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Cumberland is fortunate to have a very diverse and knowledgeable group of individuals on the Sustainable Community Steering Committee. On an annual basis, this committee meets to develop a set of priority projects for Cumberland. Individual committee members submit projects, and then as a committee the projects are reviewed and analyzed for funding. Through the knowledge of committee members, referrals are frequently made to other programs for funding. This review process allows Cumberland to maximize the number of projects being accomplished on an annual basis from a diverse group of programs and resources. The true strength of this committee comes from the individual members being able to step back from their individual projects and look at the list of proposed projects as a whole to determine what projects will have the greatest impact and be in the best interest of the entire community. The committee collectively determines the priority projects for the year and makes recommendations to the Cumberland Mayor and City Council.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) How is the proposed Sustainable Community Plan consistent with other existing community or comprehensive plans? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Cumberland Sustainable Community Plan was developed by the Cumberland Sustainable Community Steering Committee, which is comprised of a diverse group of professionals that work across a broad cross section of fields in Cumberland. Each of these individuals was chosen to participate on the Committee for their knowledge and expertise. The composition of this Committee allows us to incorporate the goals and objectives of other existing community plans, the City's Comprehensive Plan and our broad knowledge base into this single document, which then becomes a central clearing house of overarching goals and objectives for the City of Cumberland. This plan allows us to work collectively to accomplish a single set of initiatives that are in the best interest of all partners and the City of Cumberland. This ensures that we are not working at cross purpose with our partners and other entities operating within the City. For example, relevant sections of the City of Cumberland's Comprehensive Plan, Downtown Design & Development Plan, Heritage Area Management Plan, Arts & Entertainment District Plan, Virginia Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan, Main Street Maryland, City of Cumberland's Community Development Block Grant Five Year Action Plan, City of Cumberland's Sustainable Economic Development Strategic Plan and Housing Plans are all incorporated into this single planning document.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) How will the Plan help leverage and/or sustain more private sector investments? *(Answer Space 4,000 characters)*

The City of Cumberland has been successful in leveraging private sector investments through grant and loan programs in the past. This plan will help to guide the Sustainable Community Steering Committee in continuing existing programs or creating new incentives to further Cumberland's community development goals. For example, Cumberland has utilized its facade grant program to leverage private sector dollars to make substantial improvements to numerous commercial and mixed use properties in targeted areas throughout Cumberland. The use of this type of program coupled with available tax credit programs, make redevelopment projects very appealing to investors and property owners. This is especially true when a project involves the added expenses associated with historic properties. This plan also provides the Sustainable Community Steering Committee with a broad knowledge of the development initiatives for a large cross section of entities throughout Cumberland. Each Committee member has a network of contacts, resources and programs. As the Committee reviews projects, they are frequently able to make recommendations for alternative funding sources. One of these funding sources is private sector investors. Committee member connections to private foundations, development groups and individual investors provides opportunities for projects to find private sector funding that may not have otherwise been possible. By working together as a team to accomplish the goals outlined in this and previous plans, it appears that a greater number of projects are being completed than could have accomplished as individual entities.

V. PROGRESS MEASURES

For the Plan parts of section IV (A through F):

(1) List the specific outcomes that the Plan seeks to produce. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The sought outcomes have been broken out into categories to match those in the planning document. The plan is comprehensive and, to be successfully implemented, will require the prioritization and phasing of actions over time, a significant commitment of resources, and working with partners throughout the region.

A. Supporting existing communities & reducing environmental impacts.

Decrease the amount of vacant and underutilized space within the downtown.

Reinforce the historic land use pattern while encouraging compatible economic development.

Guide development and redevelopment activities to achieve a balance of residential, commercial, industrial and mixed uses; community facilities; open space and recreational areas.

Modernize the road system by integrating pedestrian/bikeways, updating traffic signage and lane markings, improving the traffic signal system and the street lighting system.

Promote use of the rehabilitation and redevelopment floating zone district and other approaches to encourage appropriate redevelopment of vacant and underutilized properties.

Implement policies that encourage the environmental stewardship.

B. Valuing communities and neighborhoods -- building upon assets and building in amenities:

Complete the Heritage Area Management Plan Update, including an update to the Downtown Design and Development Plan. This will include increasing the database of non-historic/non-designated resources within Heritage Area.

Complete a balanced approach to preserving and enhancing historic and visual resources in the context of a city-wide strategy that encourages economic development.

Maintain and improve the visual character of gateway entrances and corridors.

Use the Arts and Entertainment District as a vehicle to improve the quality of life for area residents.

Implement plans and strategies that will encourage tree planting and preservation.

C. Enhancing economic competitiveness & access to economic opportunity.

Attract additional businesses to reuse existing facilities through a combination of efficient permitting, creative use of a variety of outlying parking provisions including shuttling employees, transit enhancements, and strategic incentives.

Develop a comprehensive economic development strategy.

Create job local opportunities through linkages with the area's institutions of higher education.

Foster a coordinated, public/private sector economic development strategy to promote additional growth and job creation.

Utilize institutions of higher education to attract green jobs and initiatives.

Deploy of a broadband network that will help to make the area competitive in attracting technology-based jobs.

D. Promoting equitable access to high quality affordable housing.

Strategic demolition of blighted properties will be undertaken in order to improve the quality of life in targeted neighborhoods.

Promote a healthy, diversified housing stock for people of all ages, incomes, and levels of need.

Encourage housing renovation throughout older neighborhoods by providing incentives; promoting availability of financial resources, and using existing building codes to provide compatible rehabilitation.

Increase the number of applications submitted locally for state and federal historic tax credits through public awareness efforts.

E. Supporting transportation efficiency and access.

Provide a safe and efficient transportation network, with an emphasis on improving circulation within Cumberland and connections to outside regions.

Improved neighborhood access to trail system will occur to allow ability to bike to work or for recreation.

Enhanced directional signage system will provide for improved traffic flow and quality of travel for vehicular and pedestrian/bike users.

Improved pedestrian walkways at intersections to allow for safety enhancements, including signal controllers, and ADA accessibility.

V. PROGRESS MEASURES

(2) And, list the specific benchmarks that will be used to measure progress toward these outcomes. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The following benchmarks have been established to measure each of the expected outcomes from the Cumberland Sustainable Communities Plan:

- A. Supporting existing communities & reducing environmental impacts.
 - % reduction in energy usage/waste generation by City of Cumberland
 - % usage of renewable energy sources by City of Cumberland
 - Building permits issued for renovation of residential properties
 - Building permits issued for renovation/adaptive reuse of non-residential properties

- B. Valuing communities and neighborhoods -- building upon assets and building in amenities:
 - Number of artists registered in Arts & Entertainment District
 - Number of Arts & Entertainment District Incentive Program participants
 - Heritage tourism visitation
 - Economic impacts of visitation
 - Hotel tax collected

- C. Enhancing economic competitiveness & access to economic opportunity.
 - Reduction in the area's unemployment rate
 - Increase in average per capita income of city residents
 - Number of occupancy permits for technology-related businesses
 - Increase the availability of bandwidth
 - Number of business startups
 - Growth in the assessed valuation of the City's tax base
 - Growth in retail sales within the City

- D. Promoting equitable access to high quality affordable housing.
 - Number of permits issued for new construction
 - Number of properties land-banked for future action
 - Number of permits issued for demolition
 - Number of new housing units created

- E. Supporting transportation efficiency and access.
 - Number of transit stops within Cumberland
 - Number of bus riders originating travel from Cumberland
 - Number of trail users

REPLACE THIS PAGE WITH
LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT
RESOLUTIONS

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICATION
DISCLOSURE AUTHORIZATION AND CERTIFICATION**

The undersigned authorizes the Department of Housing and Community Development (the “Department”) to make such inquiries as necessary, including, but not limited to, credit inquiries, in order to verify the accuracy of the statements made by the applicant and to determine the creditworthiness of the applicant.

In accordance with Executive Order 01.01.1983.18, the Department advises you that certain personal information is necessary to determine your eligibility for financial assistance. Availability of this information for public inspection is governed by Maryland’s Access to Public Records Act, State Government Article, Section 10-611 et seq. of the Annotated Code of Maryland (the “Act”). This information will be disclosed to appropriate staff of the Department or to public officials for purposes directly connected with administration of this financial assistance program for which its use is intended. Such information may be shared with State, federal or local government agencies, which have a financial role in the project. You have the right to inspect, amend, or correct personal records in accordance with the Act.

The Department intends to make available to the public certain information regarding projects recommended for funding in the Sustainable Community Plan. The information available to the public will include the information in this application, as may be supplemented or amended. This information may be confidential under the Act. If you consider this information confidential and do not want it made available to the public, please indicate that in writing and attach the same to this application.

You agree that not attaching an objection constitutes your consent to the information being made available to the public and a waiver of any rights you may have regarding this information under the Act.

I have read and understand the above paragraph. Applicant’s Initials: _____

Anyone who knowingly makes, or causes to be made, any false statement or report relative to this financial assistance application, for the purposes of influencing the action of the Department on such application, is subject to immediate cancellation of financial assistance and other penalties authorized by law.

The undersigned hereby certifies that the Sustainable Communities Plan or Project(s) proposed in this Application can be accomplished and further certifies that the information set herein and in any attachment in support hereof is true, correct, and complete to the best of his/her knowledge and belief.

Authorized Signature

Print Name and Title

Date